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VADE MECUM, VOLVENTIBUS ANNIS

THE MAYANS
SAN ANTONIO,
TEXAS

Degree 6 - 7

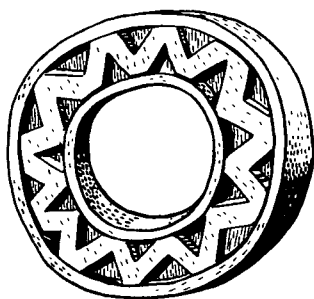
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PHILOSOPHY SERIES ONE

(Part Two)

6th and 7th Degrees



SPIRITUAL CULTIVATION CONSIDER THE SOUL

Beloved Companion:

You, as a Mayan Philosopher in the sacred 6th and 7th Degrees, will with this lesson, begin a new series of monographs devoted to a study of the Soul, that mysterious, invisible, eternal YOU, your Soul.

Philosophic as well as popular thinking on this subject has never been presented clearly enough. Indeed, he who thinks at all deeply on the subject of the Soul, soon finds himself quarreling with the definitions given in dictionaries of such well-known words as Soul, Spirit, Mind, Ego, Intellect, etc. You, who think deeply, will find soon after you interest yourself in these phases and phenomena of the over-self, that dictionary definitions of them are too thin, and sometimes downright in error. The riches of understanding to be discovered by the true seeker in these fields of thought bring you quickly to a point far beyond the dictionary definitions now available.

Yet, the task of improving such definitions is a most difficult one. It must be done in a few words. And that is well nigh impossible for the misconception of meanings are so general; the terms are so confused one with another in present day acceptance and usage.

The subject is deep as well as rich. The Mayan lessons from the first began preparing the foundation of your understanding. Here and there in the degrees you have passed through have been short series of instructions on the nature of the Soul, perhaps concealed as part of another phase of Mayan teachings. In any case, you, as a faithful follower of Mayanry, have been well prepared. You are now in position to receive many times more from what will follow than would some person however intelligent, who encountered the forthcoming instruction without preparation.

In India, in ancient China, among the Egyptians and among Mayans there was a "something" called "The Slayer of Souls". Now almost unknown (or if heard of considered a "superstition"), is a true teaching authenticated in the Bible - that

a Soul can be slain. There is a path of sin and backsliding that can result in the disintegration of the eternal Soul. Learning of this and how it can happen provides a great teaching for SAVING Souls and helping them evolve into ever higher effulgencies of Illumination.

Many are the Mysteries of the Soul and the Spirit. The difficulty in our comprehension of them is that our approach to all these invisible, yet eternal natures is a mental process. Understanding is a mental process. So also are perception and apperception. As we pursue wisdom into these phases of our being, we reach a point where they seem to melt into our mental being and are no longer purely conceptions of Spirit and Soul but of Mind. It is a problem ... !

It is a problem for Mayan philosophers. Perhaps only in these lessons is this truth recognized and pointed out to students, as in the preceding paragraph. Therefore Mayans have a new key with which to open new portals while pursuing the philosophies of these subjects. Our means of understanding is a mental process that eats and absorbs and makes like itself all that it discovers in its studies of other bodies until those bodies (Spirit and Soul) seem to be Mental bodies, too.

The subject is deep; yes, fathomless. But we are still examining its simpler phases. The broader and stronger our foundations, the easier we build the higher phases; the grander the superstructure we can place upon it. On the simpler side, as part of our basic structure, consider these thoughts:

I know that you have often heard people refer to the Soul in many ways. You have, no doubt, heard some dear old lady expressing sympathy for some unfortunate, and she might be heard to say, "The poor, dear soul. I feel so sorry for her." And then you have, I know, in religious ceremonies, heard a minister say in reverence, "God rest his soul in peace."

Most of us hear the word Soul, but do we ever stop to realize just what the Soul is? In this lecture lesson and those to follow we dwell on this subject. We point out the importance of gaining an understanding of your own Soul and the importance of this understanding in the great pattern of life, particularly the way of Life which you, as a Mayan, are striving to attain, for without this knowledge we can never attain full enlightenment.

So, Beloved Companion, we embark on this course of study earnestly, thoughtfully, and meditatively. We feel that after you have read the first lecture lesson of the series once, you will read it again with better understanding, and so we begin with the first thought, the admonishment, "Consider the Soul".

If you have a garden or a farm and it is a good one, you know what has made it so. It was cultivation. All who work in the soil know that the ground has to be prepared for the planting, the soil kept moist, the ground loosened around the growing plant, and the weeds kept out. No one ever assumes that he can get good results any other way. Nature takes care of the growing, but we have to supply the right conditions.

To what lengths we have gone in the care and cultivation of the body, and how rewarding have been the results! Compare the body of the person who has had the necessary dietary elements, the proper amount of invigorating sunlight, and

normal living conditions, to the body of the one who, like Topsy, "just grewed". What you see will explain the increased physical endurance and average length of life we have achieved. It will also suggest how much better cultivation is than letting things take their own course.

We see the same thing with regard to intellectual cultivation. The country is full of schools, and they are all crowded. These educational facilities are giving back to society each year an increasing supply of trained skill to do well the work of the world. The conditioning of these skills is neither accidental nor automatic. It is the result of conscious effort. Such things come about no other way.

How is it, then, that so many people assume that the cultivation of the soul life is unnecessary? What kind of thinking is it that passes our spiritual interests by and trusts them to chance or supposes that in some hidden way they will take care of themselves? As in the case of a plant, the soul has its own germ of life and will grow, but we must provide favorable conditions for that growth.

None of the above mentioned types of cultivation provides for the care and culture of the soul, except that a well-conditioned body does furnish it with better housing. But a starved tenant in a fine house is no appropriate condition. The tenant should be kept in at least as good condition as the house.

When Longfellow died Emerson was an old man, broken both physically and mentally. The philosopher was taken to the poet's funeral. For a long time his tired eyes looked at the placid features of the body from which Personality had departed for the Continuing City, then he was heard to murmur: "I don't know that man's name, but I remember that he had a beautiful soul."

Even in those conditions Emerson would know that, for he had spent his life contemplating soul values, collecting fragments of truth which he fitted together in beautiful and challenging designs. The emphasis in his thinking and living had been on the things of the spirit. In that respect he and Longfellow had been kinsmen. Either of them would have said the same thing about the other, for both had labored for that which does not pass away.

The great purpose served by religion through the ages has been to preserve in man the recognition of his soul. It is always at its best when it is calling attention to the soul, safeguarding its interests, cultivating its strength and beauty, and giving it adequate expression in the life of the world. When religion wavers in that purpose spiritual life suffers. It must not be forgotten nor neglected, for in it lies our one hope of the realization of that better world life which Jesus called The Kingdom and which the Book of Revelation calls the New Jerusalem.

Too often the soul gets neglected, and usually for one or both of two reasons. First, it is invisible to physical sight, and people tend to give their attention to what they can most easily see. Second, it is only quietly insistent, and people tend to recognize what most loudly presses its claims upon them. Yet, the most easily visible thing is often the most limited and least important, and what clamors most loudly for our consideration is often the thing that turns out to have the least value.

But how do we know we even have souls? Someone is always raising that question, or even going so far as to insist that we do not. The idea of the soul, like the idea of God, they say, is an invention of priestcraft to keep the people in superstitious subjection.

The trouble with that latter claim is that the idea of the soul and the idea of God are much older than priestcraft is. It was priestcraft that grew from them, not they from it. As someone has said, man is incurably religious, and that is why he has maintained religious teachers and leaders throughout the ages.

Many scientists and philosophers have stumbled at the idea of the soul, like David Hume, for instance, who insisted that even the idea of mind is merely something we have assumed because we choose to call certain reactions consciousness. He said that is all we have, sense experiences and reactions to them. If he were right, how would we account for habit, memory, reasoning, and other processes which indicate that there is something continuing that binds our sense experiences together like beads on a string. That permanent selfhood is the soul.

Read again the story of the transfiguration in the seventeenth chapter of Matthew. In it three disciples see Jesus transfigured before their wondering eyes, into His spiritual self, - a self only suggested by what they had seen before. And not only that, but Moses and Elijah, two men who had long been gone from the earth life, stood beside Him in their spiritual bodies. Something had survived the two physical bodies that had long been still in death. That continuing something is the soul.

Or take the case of Lazarus. Something had left the body of the man of Bethany, and he was pronounced dead. Four days later when the Lord of life returned He recalled that something to the silent form in the tomb, and Lazarus was again a living man. That something that had departed and was recalled had been in safe keeping. It was the soul.

Turn to the Book of Malachi, the last book of prophecy and of the Old Testament. In the fourth chapter and fifth verse is the assurance that God would again send Elijah to his people to prepare them for the coming of the Master, though Elijah had long been dead, as men say. In Matthew xi;14 and Mark ix;11-13 we find Jesus announcing that this promise has already been fulfilled, that Elijah has already returned to the earth life and become the announcer of the Messiah, except that this time he is known as John the Baptist. Students of the Bible will readily recognize the similarity between the personalities of the supposedly two men. Accepting the statement of Jesus, we are at once confronted with the question as to how such a thing could happen. It could happen only by the survival of something that had made Elijah what he was, and its revisitation here as something that made John the Baptist the same kind of man. It was the soul.

Others say that even if we have souls, thinking about them and trying to work with them is not mentally wholesome and should be avoided. They say it makes introverts of us. Now hardly anyone is either wholly introvert or wholly extrovert. Most people emphasize the inner life at times and the outer life at other times, which is as it should be. It is just as bad a mental practice to overemphasize the outer life as the inner one.

Of course if one thinks of nothing else but his soul the effect is not good, for that too throws life out of balance; but, far from being unwholesome, the proper and balanced care of the inner life is a highly beneficial practice. The interests of life in its entirety should always be kept in view, and that necessarily means that the soul is no more to be neglected than any other phase of it.

Perhaps you are saying that you don't understand the soul. Who does? You say it is a mystery. What isn't? How did the people of old come to the early and general conclusion that they had souls? It happened because they observed certain facts and conditions that could not be explained on any other basis, so they assumed the presence of the soul and as everything seemed to fit the assumption held.

Unscientific, did you say? That is known as a hypothesis, and it is one of the commonest methods of science. At least one of the great planets of our system was discovered by that process. Certain irregularities occurred in the motion of other planets, irregularities which indicated the existence of a planet as yet unknown. Its existence and approximate position were assumed and a search finally resulted in its discovery, but it was really known long before it was ever seen. The laboratories are all the time working with entities that cannot be seen, even with the microscope, but the effects of their presence can be seen. Sometimes their trails can be photographed. Therefore they are known to exist. How could we observe the workings of the soul if it were not there?

Assuming that you have a soul, there is at least one thing you know about it from the beginning. Since it belongs to a living organism, and since its presence is necessary to keep that organism normally living and functioning, the soul is a living thing. It seems safe to assume that it is a living thing in a much more vital sense than is the body itself, because the soul is of the very essence of life, whereas the body lives only because God has breathed into it the breath of life, which apparently was the soul substance.

Certain things are true of anything that is alive. One is that it passes through a development cycle, which we call growth. Almost anything we see is at the time we see it largely a bundle of possibilities. As Jesus said, everything is like the development of a stalk of corn - first the grain, then the ear, then the fully developed corn in the ear. A rosebud, a child, an acorn is the possibility of a blossom, a man, or an oak tree. The normal thing is for these possibilities to keep unfolding until the pattern is complete. That is, life is always on the way to perfection. A living thing must always change, because it is always growing.

If it doesn't grow it degenerates, and turns into a warped, twisted, weakened thing. It becomes like a human being whose development has been arrested, a pitiful dwarf. Futile living and early death are the result. When this happens it is the result of one or more of four things, and that is as true in the cultivation of the soul as in the growing of a harvest.

One is failure to provide the right growing conditions. The soul will not prosper in a life whose atmosphere is one of contention, strife, hatred, emotional unbalance, and erratic living. It requires an atmosphere of harmony, serenity, and calm, about which more will be said later.

Another is failure to protect the growing thing against destructive and

ruinous influences. Low ideals, negative thinking and action, injustice toward others, materialism, selfishness - all these are to the soul what destructive insects, blighting fungi, and poisonous elements are to growing vegetation. Developing things must be protected from such adverse influences, and the more delicate they are, the more necessary is the protection.

Still another is mistreatment and abuse. Have you seen a flower bed where the chickens have been scratching or the children playing, leaving the tender stalks and delicate petals torn, twisted, and crushed? Does it not remind you of a wounded soul? Our souls are more often damaged by ourselves than by others. We can protect them against what others say and do, but what can protect them from ourselves?

The last is simple lack of nourishment. Any living thing requires food. We know what to eat, what to give the children, and what to feed the animals. What a pity we do not better learn what is good nourishment for the soul! Many things are wholesome nourishment for the soul, and among them are good reading, right thinking, constructive meditation, wholesome and inspiring companionship, conversation with others about the beautiful and true, worship, prayer, and the doing of good. The soul that is regularly fed on such things will not be lean.

Do not wait to nourish the soul till you know all about it and the food it requires, for that time will never come. The results would be disastrous if a mother should wait to begin feeding her baby till she had investigated and analyzed all the baby foods to determine which one is best. The requirements for growth will not wait and if a thing is alive it must be fed now. You can improve the diet as you learn more about it.

Now let us go back and consider further the first-mentioned requirement for soul development, which was right growing conditions. When you plant flowers or grain you see to it that conditions are right and that the growing thing is disturbed only for purposes of care and tending. The same must be done in the culture of the soul. However well nourished it may be, it will develop properly only in an atmosphere of serenity and calm. The husbandman must be patient while nature works the miracle of growth.

If you are disposed to be temperamental, fidgety, and upset, any great degree of spiritual cultivation is not for you till you overcome these weaknesses. Nor are they any more conducive to the health of the body than they are to that of the soul.

One of the most necessary things for soul culture and for all dealings with matters of the soul is silence. A loose, jittery tongue is fatal to spiritual culture, and one reason is that it indicates the loose, jittery type of mind which is least likely to develop in its higher understandings and responses. Yet talk does not have to be loose and jittery to militate against spiritual cultivation. Too much talk of any kind does, even that of the wisest man, because one just doesn't hear the voice of God when he is busy listening to himself. One may tell what he knows ever so eloquently, but he learns more only by listening.

The good conversationalist is not the one who does the most talking but the one who knows how and when to stop and listen. Listening is an invitation to wisdom and power, and that is what the spiritual silence is - listening. For what? You

will know the answer to that only after you have had some experience in asking eternity for its secrets. No one else can say what you will hear or experience, for it will be for yourself alone. One cannot have another's experience; he can only have his own.

Through years of spiritual cultivation the Mahatma Ghandi managed to develop enough power to sway millions of people and successfully resist some of the greatest powers on earth. This came about because he had followed the rules of spiritual development and made practical use of the unfoldment thus achieved. For one thing he kept the rule of silence. For years he kept one whole day of silence each week.

Most forms of worship do not make enough of a place for silence, and in many cases where they do it is not carried out in such a way as to be effectual. The old-time silent meeting of the Quakers was founded on correct psychology. The people would sit in silence except as they were moved spiritually to do or say something. It was good soul development. Most worship makes too much provision for listening to human voices and not enough for listening to the voice of the Divine. You, as a Mayan, have learned the Spiritual value of our periods of Meditation.

The same is true of prayer. Anything worthy of that name is sympathetic conversation with the Divine, and talk is not conversation at all if it is one-sided. If it is important in human conversation to do plenty of listening to the other person, it is even more important in any attempt to converse with God. The person who merely makes a speech before the throne is not communing, and he is probably missing great experiences he might have if he would be still and wait to hear what God has to say to him. It might come in a thought flash, an impulse, an audible sound, or a visible symbol. Whatever form it might take, one does not get it unless he keeps silence to wait, watch, and listen.

One of the highest spiritual hours ever experienced by human beings was on the occasion spoken of in the second chapter of Acts as Pentecost. That was a time when a company of people remained still enough in their hearts and harmonious enough in their thoughts till they became conscious of a spiritual presence that changed their lives and turned the current of history. It would never have happened had they been gossiping, trying to impress each other, or showing impatience for something to happen. Something did happen when the necessary spiritual atmosphere was created by enough silent waiting to generate the required power.

Go into silence at least once a day. Have a fixed hour and place if possible but if not possible do the best you can. Devote at least thirty minutes to your silence from the first. You will soon be wanting to devote more, and the time will come when no period will seem too long. A properly conducted period of silence is not tedious. It is restful, reviving, and often thrilling.

Separate your thoughts from every earthly thing. Relax your body and mind. Close your eyes. Disregard all earthly sounds. Suppress your own feelings and desires. Then wait, watch, and listen. If nothing happens at first, do not get discouraged. Some people have to wait a long time.

If you become conscious of little bursts of sound or see little flashes of light, keep observing. Try to interpret them as they become stronger and more intelligible. They mean that your soul is beginning to awaken and cast off the effects of

centuries of racial neglect. It has begun to return to something of what it was created to be and do. From that time on life will be a daily thrill for you. Like Enoch of old, you will have begun to walk with God.

Begin and close your silences with a prayer for the development of your spiritual self. Your prayers will be taken seriously by the Father, and you will get results of some kind. Let God have a chance in your life. You will be amply rewarded.

Make you queer? Nonsense. It never made anyone queer, though it has cured many people of their queerness. It is a process of finding the sources of poise and eternal calm that steadied the saints and martyrs at the stake and Jesus on the cross. Is getting in tune with the universe calculated to make one queer?

Take some of the great-souled men and women of the centuries, and note the care and consideration they gave to their spiritual selves. The long hours Jesus gave to silence and prayer were the hours in which He was building up His power. After having spent years of cultivating His soul, as one would tend a delicate plant, He did not let it fall carelessly from Him on the cross, but commended it back to God. The soul should be cared for with the zeal and concern with which people care for fine jewels, rich treasures, and valuable reputations.

Why was it Moses who was called on to ascend Sinai and receive the divine law? Because no one else had the spiritual cultivation to be able to do it. He had heard the voice of God before, and it was no accident. It never is. Effort had been made to achieve that sensitiveness to the divine spirit. In other words, this man had taken care of his soul.

An incidental phrase in the setting for the Book of Revelation explains why we have the book at all. You will recall that John says by way of explanation that on the Isle of Patmos he "was in the spirit on the Lord's Day". The revelation never would have been received had not a man been there who had learned how to be in the spirit, that is in tune with the Giver of the revelation. That was no accident either. John had learned much from Jesus, and he had no doubt given great care to his own spiritual cultivation.

An outstanding spiritual figure in the Old Testament is Daniel, and enough is told of his spiritual practice that one can follow much of it. The heart of it was communion. Read again in his book how persistent were his prayer habits, which undoubtedly included plenty of silence. Observe too that he had a fixed hour and place - three times a day at a window open toward Jerusalem to which his heart turned from distant Babylon. Daniel's revelation was no accident either. He received it because he, above others, had cultivated his soul and kept it sensitive.

In your spiritual cultivation work always use the same good sense you do in the care of your body or mind. Avoid extremes, keep human, and be normal in your social relationships. These should all be improved by the fact that you have not neglected that means by which one must keep acquainted with the Eternal. Thus you will attain to a complete, symmetrical, well-balanced life, in which neither the spiritual nor the physical is neglected or out of adjustment. Each needs the other.

No brief course of lessons can wholly represent an adequate program of soul

cultivation. All such a course can do is to get you started. What you are now beginning is something that is never completed, because truth is universal. The caution is hardly necessary, for few who start on this road can ever be induced to forsake the quest. They want to go on indefinitely in the work of cultivating, furnishing, enriching, strengthening, and beautifying the inner life.

The soul that steps from the worn body of one who is through with the earth phase of life is not something that has been instantaneously and mysteriously made over. Its growth too has been in accord with natural law, and like the body was it is exactly what its owner's care has made it. If it has had the right food and cultivation it will be strong and ready. If not, it will be like any other neglected and undernourished thing. So the nurture of the soul is a perfectly natural and realistic process, and it is not something that can await some convenient season. It requires care every day, just like any other living and growing thing.

As you meditate on the thoughts given you in this monograph on Spiritual Cultivation, we feel sure that you will be in a most receptive mood to receive the next phase, The Spiritual Senses, and it is our prayer that your Mind, Body, Spirit and Soul be filled to over-flowing with ever increasing understanding.

May God Bless You.

Your Class Instructor,
and The Mayans.

YOUR NEXT REVELATION

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SPIRITUAL CULTIVATION - II - YOUR SPIRITUAL SENSES

Philosophy Series Number I, Part II. Your second lesson in Spiritual Cultivation, discussing Your Spiritual Senses.

THE SEAT OF THE IMMORTAL SOUL

THE SPIRITUAL FORM	CLAIRVOYANCE
SENSES OF THE BODY	SPIRITUAL EMANATIONS
SENSES OF THE SOUL	SELF REVELATIONS
EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION	SELF DEVELOPMENT

These are the principal thoughts and revelations contained in Your Next Mayan Monograph Number 80.